

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-15 and 17 were rejected as being obvious over Aamodt et al (US 6,805,719) in view of either Fauteux et al (US 5,217,827) or Kejha et al (US Pub. 2003/0027051). However, claims 18 and 19 were indicated to include allowable subject matter. Specifically, Aamodt does not teach or suggest a reinforcing member comprising an alkali metal coupled to an overlapped region.

By this response, claim 1 has been amended to include the limitation found absent from the combination of Aamodt, Fauteux and Kejha. Accordingly, amended claim 1 and the claims dependent thereon are allowable.

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted the claims distinguish over the prior art and that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this Amendment, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned attorney to attend to those matters.

Respectfully submitted,

September 18, 2007  
Date

/Carol F. Barry/  
Carol F. Barry  
Reg. No. 41,600  
(763) 514-4673  
Customer No. 27581